



News for Immediate Release

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DWR Announces New Delta Pumping Cutbacks

SACRAMENTO -- The Department of Water Resources begins further reductions today in State Water Project (SWP) pumping to comply with Federal Judge Oliver Wanger's restrictions to protect Delta smelt.

"At a time when our water systems would normally be supplying farmers with irrigation water and replenishing local water supplies for the summer months, we are scaling back exports," said DWR Director Lester Snow. "This further underscores the need for action to restore the Delta."

Last month, Gov. Schwarzenegger outlined a comprehensive plan for Delta sustainability that includes more water conservation, better emergency response and flood protection, and actions to ensure a cleaner, safer water supply.

The SWP will reduce exports from about 2,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) to about 1,500 cfs. Normally, this time of year with current water conditions, SWP pumping would be about 8,000 cfs.

The additional reduction is in response to increased salvage of adult smelt at the Banks pumping plant. Salvage of adult smelt has increased over the past week and continues to be above the "concern level" in the Delta Smelt Action Matrix.

To meet demands from farmers and communities south of the Delta and the Bay Area, DWR will begin to draw water from San Luis Reservoir at least a month earlier than it normally would.

DWR projects that its water deliveries will be reduced up 30 percent this year as a result of the court order. Because more than 25 million Californians and much of the state's agriculture industry depends on water from the Delta, these cutbacks will have a significant impact on local water supplies and the state's economy.

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

Contact the DWR Public Affairs Office for more information about DWR's water activities.